

## INITIAL ATTACK DISPATCH CENTER COMPLEXITIES

A dispatch center's complexity is determined by the program complexity of the units supported by that dispatch center. A unit's program complexity is computed following the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide, Instructions and Guiding Principles for Complexity Descriptors. Basically, if the unit complexity is high, the dispatch center's complexity is high.

Only the Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher and the Center Manager positions are affected by the dispatch center's and unit's program complexity. Initial Attack Dispatchers are represented in all dispatch centers at each complexity level with the same knowledge, skill, and ability requirements. Minimum Qualifications Standards for Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher and Center Manager are not affected by program complexity.

A **HIGH COMPLEXITY** dispatch center is an interagency dispatch center that supports more than one unit. At least one of the units has a high program complexity. These centers have a Center Manager. Normally there are at least two Initial Attack Lead Dispatchers or Assistant Center Managers representing the major agencies supported by the dispatch center.

A **MODERATE COMPLEXITY** dispatch center is either:

- an interagency dispatch center that supports more than one unit and at least one unit has a moderate program complexity, or
- a single agency dispatch center and that unit has a high program complexity.

These centers have a Center Manager and an Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher or Assistant Center Manager. A single agency dispatch center may or may not have a Center Manager with the Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher supervising the center.

A **LOW COMPLEXITY** dispatch center is either:

- a single agency dispatch center supporting a single unit with low or moderate program complexity, or
- a single agency dispatch office supporting a single unit with moderate or high program complexity, but the dispatch center orders through an interagency dispatch center to the geographic area coordination center.

These centers would not have a center manager. The Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher would supervise the center.



## INDIVIDUAL POSITION STANDARD AND GUIDE

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The following individual position standard and guide includes these components:

- ◆ Minimum Qualifications Standards
- ◆ Employee Development Training
- ◆ Competency Descriptors: Common Competencies, and Position Competencies
- ◆ Key Performance Elements

The “**Minimum Qualifications Standards**” are used in a variety of ways.

- ◆ For identifying minimum qualifications on vacancy announcements
- ◆ For recruitment crediting plans
- ◆ For identifying OPM series standard requirements
- ◆ For determining minimum grade levels
- ◆ For identifying any specialized experience requirements
- ◆ For identifying NWCG Incident Management Qualifications requirements
- ◆ For identifying “additional required training” for a position, beyond that required for NWCG Incident Management Qualifications
- ◆ As guides for employees when constructing Employee Development Plans for future positions

“Additional Required Training” identifies training that is required prior to being considered qualified for a position. It cannot be challenged. An agency equivalent course may be used as a substitute when that course meets or exceeds a required course’s learning and performance objectives.

“Employee Development Training” identifies training that assists an employee in meeting position competencies, in addition to training that is required. It is recognized that training is not the only way of obtaining competencies, but the identified courses do provide many, though not necessarily all, of the knowledge and skills needed to meet position competencies.

The “Common Competency Descriptors for All Positions” is intended to supplement each position “Competency Descriptor.” They are competencies needed for most positions. Employees obtain these “Common Competencies” through personal education and experiences, through agency orientation and mission renewal programs, and through interaction with peers, teams, and supervisors.

These “Competency Descriptors/Common Competency Descriptors” are used in a variety of ways.

- ◆ Constructing Employee Development Plans
- ◆ Developing Recruitment Crediting Plans
- ◆ Evaluating employee performance

The “Standard Key Performance Elements” are to be used to evaluate employee performance, in conjunction with “Competency Descriptors.” These “Performance Elements” are defined as a mission-based outcome or end product that is essential to overall success of the position. Not surprisingly, these “Performance Elements” are derived from the major elements of the “Competency Descriptors.”



## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS

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The following “Minimum Qualifications Standards” are established, meeting the direction outlined in the Implementation Action Plan Report of the 1995 Federal Fire Policy Review. Action Items # 27, 62 and 63 from that Action Plan specifically direct the establishment and utilization of these standards by federal wildland fire management agencies.

- Applicants must meet the appropriate Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualification standards AND the Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) standards before being placed in a key fire management position.
- Applicants must attain all identified competencies within three years of being placed into the position. Until competencies are met, employees must be supervised by employees who meet the qualification standards above and all identified competencies.
- To meet these minimum standards, all identified “Minimum Qualifications Standards” components (“OPM Standard Requirements,” “Specialized Experiences,” “Additional Required Training” and “NWCG Incident Management Qualifications”) must be met.
- These “Minimum Qualification Standards” must be used when recruiting for vacant positions. “Specialized Experience,” “Required Training,” and “NWCG Incident Management Qualifications” requirements are assumed to be cumulative as complexity increases within a position. For example, requirements for a high complexity unit fire program manager include the requirements for moderate and low complexity unit fire program managers.
- Where NWCG Incident Management Qualifications are shown, they relate to minimum incident management skills required to manage the local program on the unit. The assumption is made that if higher incident management skills are needed to manage an incident, they would be ordered through the standard resource ordering process.
- Differing complexity levels are identified for the Wildland Fire Operations Specialist, Prescribed Fire & Fuels Specialist, Prevention & Education Specialists, and Dispatcher series positions. There is a transition level identified, from technician to professional, for these positions.
- “Employee Development Training” identifies training that assists an employee in meeting position competencies, in addition to training that is required. It is recognized that training is not the only way of obtaining competencies, but the identified courses do provide many, though not necessarily all, of the knowledge and skills needed to meet position competencies.
- Each Minimum Qualification Standard is identified by the fire organizational title. The formal classification title will be based on the appropriate job series.



# MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

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## CENTER MANAGER

This position can be established at either the professional or technical level, depending upon whether professional or technical knowledge is required. This, in turn, depends upon the structure which the position is established. If the position is established at the technical level, any professional duties would be handled by a separate, usually higher graded, professional position.

### OPM Standard Requirements - GS-455/462 Technician Series

One year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level. Graduate education may be substituted for specialized experience only when it is directly related to the work of the position. Further information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, specifically, OPM's Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Technical and Medical Support Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for either the 455 or 462 series. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

### OPM Standard Requirements - GS-401 Professional Series

Bachelor's degree in biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, or a related discipline appropriate to the position being filled; OR a combination of education and experience as defined in the Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist. Additional information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for the 401 series. The Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist and assistance in interpreting the standard are posted at [http://www.nifc.gov/training\\_qual/IFPM/ifpm.htm](http://www.nifc.gov/training_qual/IFPM/ifpm.htm)  
OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

**Recommended minimum grade level at moderate complexity - GS-10**

**Recommended minimum grade level at high complexity - GS-11**

### Specialized Experience -

Applicants must have a minimum of one year of creditable specialized wildland fire management experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

Specialized experience is that experience which has provided the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully function in the wildland fire

management position applied for. Possession of the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities can be evidenced by:

- reviewing and evaluating fire management plans for ecological soundness and technical adequacy.
- conducting field inspections before and after prescribed or wildland fires to determine if objectives were achieved and/or evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.
- developing analyses on the ecological role of fire and its use and/or exclusion, and smoke management.

In addition to fire program management, appropriate experience must have included either prescribed fire/fuels management - OR - fire management operations as described below:

Prescribed fire/fuels management - experience in a broad range of activities such as:

- inventory methods and procedures
- fuel treatment methods and programming
- land use planning and environmental coordination
- evaluating prescribed burn plans or fire management plans to ensure containment is possible and identify contingencies if containment is not obtained.

Fire management operations - analyzing and applying fire management strategies, plus experience in at least five of the following activities:

- mobilization and dispatch coordination
- fire prevention and education
- training
- logistics
- equipment development and deployment
- fire communication systems
- suppression and preparedness
- aviation

The above specialized experience may be evidenced by the following or similar positions:

Wildland firefighting operations experience is required  
AND  
Initial attack Lead Dispatcher/ Assistant Center Manager

**NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Not Required****Command:** ----**OR****Operations:** ----**AND****Prescribed Fire:** ----**AND****Dispatch** Support Dispatcher**Additional required training as presented in the following courses, or agency equivalent:**

- S-491 “National Fire Danger Rating System”
- 40-HR Supervisory Training
- Basic dispatcher computer skills training
- Training to provide intermediate computer skills and working knowledge of various fire management computer programs.



## EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

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### CENTER MANAGER

**Employee should receive the following developmental training, (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies:**

- D-111 (formerly D-105) “Entry Level Dispatcher”
- D-110 “Dispatch Recorder”
- D-310 “Support Dispatcher”
- I-100 “Introduction to ICS
- I-200 “Basic ICS”
- I-300 “Intermediate ICS”
- I-400 “Advanced ICS”
- I-401 “Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) Group”
- S-110 “Basic Fire Suppression Orientation”
- S-205 “Fire Operations in Urban Interface”
- S-260 “Fire Business Management Principles”
- S-270 “Basic Air Operations”
- S-290 “Intermediate Fire Behavior”
- Aviation acquisition/procurement
- Aviation capabilities & limitations
- Aviation dispatching
- Aviation management & coordination
- Aviation mishap reporting
- Aviation policy and regulations
- Aviation radio use
- Aviation transport of HAZMAT
- Crew resource management
- Flight payment document
- “Hazardous Material Awareness Program for Firefighters”
- Human factors in aviation
- Interagency aviation organizations
- Mission planning & flight request process
- Multi-media First Aid
- Risk management (aviation)
- “Weather Information Management System”



## COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS

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A “competency” is defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and abilities which, when acquired, allows a person to perform a task or function at a specifically defined level of proficiency.

A “common competency” is one that describes the knowledge, skills and abilities found in most or all key fire management positions identified in this Guide.

Competencies are described in terms of three “Expertise Levels” (working, journey, and expert). The appropriate level of expertise for that particular competency is indicated under the relevant level of complexity. Expertise level definitions and an example of expertise and complexity levels are included on the first page of each “Competency Descriptor.”

**NOTE:** The “working” level of expertise identified in the “Competency Descriptors” is defined as the minimum level of experience and/or training that it takes to produce work of acceptable quality and meet safety standards.

It is **not** intended that a prospective job applicant have all the defined competencies in their entirety when first selected for any position at any level (unless the hiring unit so chooses, and indicates same in a vacancy announcement). It **is** intended that the employee achieve all indicated competencies before being considered at a full-performance level. Timelines for achieving full-performance level standards should be specified in vacancy announcements and other personnel documents.

The Common Competency Descriptors are intended to supplement each position’s Competency Descriptor; the two should be used together. Employees obtain these common competencies through personal education and experiences, through agency orientation and mission renewal programs, and through interaction with peers, teams, and supervisors.

The “Competency Descriptors” may be used in a variety of ways:

- Constructing Employee Development Plans
- Developing Recruitment Crediting Plans, supplementing the “Minimum Qualification Standards”
- Evaluating employee performance, supplementing the “Standard Key Performance Elements”



# COMMON COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR DISPATCH FUNCTIONS

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## All Positions Descriptor

The following Common Competencies are needed across most positions and at the entry level of positions by every employee. Employees obtain these Common Competencies through personal education and experiences, through agency orientation and mission renewal programs, and through interaction with peers, teams, and supervisors. These competencies must be taken in context of a particular position for scope and complexity.

Core competencies (skill levels) that do not change due to program complexity do not reappear in the individual position descriptions. If program complexity changes the skill level required, then the competency will appear with the appropriate expertise level described, using such language as “comprehensive” or “expert.”

## EXPERTISE LEVELS DEFINITIONS

### WORKING - W

**Definition:** The minimum level of experience and/or training that it takes to produce work of acceptable quality.

### JOURNEY - J

**Definition:** Has sufficient experience to be considered a seasoned employee. Is skilled in performing the more difficult tasks related to the function. Has received advanced training in the function.

### EXPERT - E

**Definition:** Reflects the quality of experience and/or training needed to perform the most challenging aspects of the position.

## I. Mission Comprehension

### Description

This competency requires background and understanding of the agency enabling legislation and its ramifications, and additional responsibilities that have historically evolved.

### Outline

A. Describe the agency's historical background and mission evolution.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of the agency's historical background and mission evolution.	W
Knowledge of enabling legislation and other acts affecting agency's mission.	W
Ability to describe the historical background of the agency.	W
Ability to explain the purpose of the agency.	W

B. Identify relevant agency mandates.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of existing mandates and resolutions.	W

C. Define the purpose of limits within the agency.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of social, political and fiscal limits within the agency.	W

## II. Agency Orientation

### Description

This competency requires a comprehension of the structure and the organization of the agency's organizational levels; an understanding of the structure and organization of the Departments of Agriculture or Interior and its place in the Federal government; and the development of an insight into an individual employee's role in the agency in particular, and in the Federal government in general.

### Outline

A. Describe the structure and organization of the Department of Agriculture or Interior.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of the basics of government structure and function.	W
Knowledge of the structure and function of the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture, United States Forest Service.	W
Knowledge of applicable Code of Federal Regulations.	W
Ability to describe the relationship of the agency to the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture, United States Forest Service.	W

B. Describe the structure and the organization of the agency.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of how goals and strategies provide structured guidance towards accomplishing an agency's mission.	NA
Knowledge of agency organizational structures.	W
Ability to define how the agency relates on an interagency basis.	W

### III. Resource Stewardship

#### Description

This competency requires an understanding of the natural, cultural, and historical resources protected; the range in responsibilities in managing these resources in the context of fire management; the individual's role in resource stewardship; and the ability to work with partners outside the agency to promote resource stewardship.

#### Outline

A. Describe federal stewardship of natural resources.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of federal legislation regarding resource management such as National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Air Act, Wilderness Act, Threatened and Endangered Species Act and the Natural Historical Preservation Act.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of environmental, technical, social consequences of proposed decisions and actions.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of public perceptions of the risks and the benefits of resource alternative strategies.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of the role of scientific knowledge and advanced technologies.	<b>W</b>
Ability to learn current natural resources policy initiatives.	<b>W</b>

B. Identify resources protected by the agency and describe the responsibilities in managing these resources.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of natural, cultural, and historical resources managed by the agency.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of ecosystem management and the ecological response to the presence or absence of fire.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of the agency planning process and how it contributes to resource stewardship.	<b>W</b>
Ability to articulate the agency stewardship function.	<b>W</b>

C. Define the sustainable practices philosophy.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of agency multiple use acts.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of related fields such as forestry, range, wildlife, botany, soils and water (hereafter referred to as resources).	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of how different resources contribute to sustainable practices.	<b>NA</b>
Ability to describe how different resources interact.	<b>NA</b>
Ability to define sustainability in the context of overall resource management.	<b>NA</b>

D. Define the employee's role in resource stewardship.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of agency's workforce resource priorities.	<b>W</b>
Ability to explain the individual's role in supporting the agency's stewardship function.	<b>W</b>
Ability to implement agency priorities within an individual's work assignments.	<b>J</b>

E. Recognize the positive purposes of interagency partnerships.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of fire management partnership benefits.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of cooperating agency's missions, organizations, and operating procedures.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of why the agency needs and interacts with partners to fulfill its resource stewardship role.	<b>J</b>
Ability to participate in interagency workshops and other project processes.	<b>J</b>
Ability to recognize the value of interagency fire management cooperation to meet fire management program goals.	<b>J</b>

#### IV. Fundamental Values

##### Description

This competency focuses on the employee's ability to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors to accomplish an assigned job and to contribute to the overall health of the organization. These attitudes and behaviors include teamwork; ethical behavior towards people and the organization; support of cultural diversity, accessibility, and fairness issues in the workplace; and an attitude towards safe behavior for one's self and for others.

The safety competency identifies an understanding of the environmental and workplace hazards of the wildland fire environment. It focuses on the employee's ability to provide leadership and direction in recognition and the mitigation of these hazards, using all applicable laws, policies and guidelines. Utilizing this approach, a passion for safety will be instilled with zero tolerance for unsafe acts. All employees will be personally accountable for safety.

##### Outline

A. Supervise and develop employees.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of personnel hiring, pay, discipline, and termination procedures.	J
Knowledge of methods and techniques of personal motivation, organization, supervision, and evaluation in order to emphasize accountability.	J
Knowledge of the processes and sources of training.	J
Skill in practicing the commonly accepted individual values of performance, commitment, interdependence, authority, responsibility, accountability, choice, risk management, and excellence.	J
Skill in applying the accepted principles of delegation.	J
Skill in carrying out proper fiscal and accountable actions.	J
Ability to apply sound personnel management skills to include supervision, coaching, training, motivation, and evaluation.	W

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Ability to conduct oneself in an ethical manner.	<b>J</b>
Ability to transmit high performance expectations and to follow up on personnel accomplishments.	<b>J</b>
Ability to impart self-confidence and empowerment.	<b>J</b>
Ability to initiate recommendations for change.	<b>J</b>
Ability to assess personal attitudes towards others and one's employer.	<b>J</b>
Ability to develop new insights into situations in order to improve the situation, increase efficiencies, or to mitigate safety problems.	<b>J</b>
Ability to create effective standards and operating procedures for personnel safety.	<b>J</b>

B. Implement safe workplace practices.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of agency laws, policies, and guidelines such as NWCG's Standard Firefighting Orders and Watch Out Situations.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of wildland fire hazards.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of wildland fire safety practices and procedures.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of basic first aid procedures.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of hazard and risk analysis requirements for such areas as human factors, fuels, weather, topography, aviation, mechanized equipment, and hazardous materials.	<b>W</b>
Skill in using safety related education programs with the focus on training and performance certification.	<b>W</b>
Skill in using educational and certification processes to impart a passion for safety.	<b>W</b>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Skill in applying basic first aid procedures.	<b>J</b>
Ability to recognize and correct unsafe practices and conditions.	<b>W</b>

C. Identify workplace accessibility issues.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.	<b>W</b>
Ability to make reasonable accommodation for disabled persons.	<b>W</b>

D. Describe the guiding principles of time management.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge as to how time management affects one's personal well being and stress level.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of the impact of internal and external influences on available time and time choices.	<b>W</b>
Ability to understand how individual factors of values, priorities, and goals affect time choices.	<b>W</b>
Ability to define the difference between internal and external prime time.	<b>W</b>
Ability to develop an effective time management strategy.	<b>J</b>
Ability to monitor time spent and make adjustments as needed.	<b>J</b>

E. Describe the agency's management culture.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of the agency's values and philosophy.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of external influences on the agency's mission, budget, and operational procedures.	<b>W</b>
Ability to define those elements of the management culture that have an effect on meeting one's job performance requirements.	<b>J</b>

F. Implement cultural diversity, equal opportunity and civil rights policies.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of appropriate act requirements to include the Equal Opportunity Act, Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, 29 CFR 1604.11(a) Sexual Harassment.	<b>W</b>
Skill in carrying out supervisory and leadership responsibilities relevant to the workplace acts.	<b>J</b>

## V. Leadership

### Description

This competency requires a comprehension of the basics of leadership.

### Outline

A. Demonstrate appropriate leadership skills to meet agency goals and safe operating procedures.

<u>Competencies</u>	<u>Dispatch Functions</u>
Knowledge of acceptable leadership characteristics.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of delegation as a leadership and team building tool.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of management styles most appropriate to deal with internal and external controls.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the steps of effective conflict resolution.	<b>J</b>
Ability to function as an effective team member.	<b>J</b>
Ability to recognize changing conditions, develop alternative strategies, and take appropriate action.	<b>J</b>
Ability to be decisive in leadership roles.	<b>J</b>
Ability to define one's leadership style.	<b>W</b>
Ability to adjust one's leadership style to meet the agency mission.	<b>J</b>
Ability to describe how the development levels of followers affect one's leadership style.	<b>W</b>
Ability to understand and apply the basic styles of conflict resolution such as avoiding, accommodating, compromising, competing, and collaborating.	<b>J</b>

## VI. Problem Solving Skills

### Description

This competency deals with the ability to analyze, build consensus, make decisions, and practice innovation in various aspects of the job.

### Outline

A. Analyze a situation, determine alternative solutions, and recommend a course of action.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of assessment skills.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of how a situation deviates from the norm or a standard.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of factors contributing to a problem.	<b>J</b>
Skill in distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information and making logical judgments.	<b>J</b>
Skill in collecting, grouping contributing factors.	<b>J</b>
Ability to use sound reasoning to arrive at a conclusion.	<b>J</b>
Ability to narrow the problem area.	<b>J</b>

## B. Make sound and well-informed decisions.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of organizational goals and objectives.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of organizational policy and guidelines.	<b>J</b>
Skill in identifying the impact and implications of decisions.	<b>J</b>
Ability to quantify costs of decisions.	<b>J</b>
Ability to describe the rationale for a decision.	<b>J</b>

## C. Identify and mitigate stressful influences.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of stress indicators.	<b>J</b>
Skill in recognizing the impacts of stress on the functions of supervision and leadership.	<b>J</b>
Skill in mitigating stressful situations.	<b>J</b>
Ability to minimize negative personal impacts.	<b>J</b>

## D. Utilize facilitation skills to resolve problems and promote consensus.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of group processes.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the five basic styles of conflict resolution.	<b>W</b>
Skill in building group consensus to meet objectives through give and take.	<b>W</b>
Ability to foster commitment.	<b>W</b>
Ability to negotiate to find mutually acceptable solutions.	<b>W</b>
Ability to encourage and receive cooperation.	<b>J</b>
Ability to gain cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.	<b>E</b>

**VII. Communication Skills****Description**

This competency relates to the ability to communicate effectively with the public and employees in writing and speech; to work as an effective team member; to use interpersonal skills to become an effective employee; and to exhibit basic computer capabilities.

**Outline**

## A. Communicate effectively.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of effective listening, speaking, and writing skills.	<b>E</b>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b><u>Dispatch Functions</u></b>
Knowledge of the characteristics of effective written communications.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of communication methods used by the supervisor.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of how a team of people communicate to accomplish a common goal.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of basic computer keyboard requirements.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of computer data entry and retrieval.	<b>J</b>
Skill in writing basic letters and reports and filling out basic forms for routine agency operations.	<b>J</b>
Ability to identify the types of non-verbal communication methods.	<b>W</b>
Ability to express facts and ideas in writing in a succinct and organized manner.	<b>J</b>
Ability to define the speaker, listener, and observer tasks in communications.	<b>W</b>
Ability to facilitate an open exchange of information.	<b>J</b>
Ability to identify the conditions necessary for accurate and effective communications.	<b>J</b>
Ability to consider and respond appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of others, and adjust communication approaches to suit different people and situations.	<b>W</b>
Ability to perform computer technological skills such as word processing, electronic mail, and Internet processes.	<b>J</b>
Ability to explain agency programs and procedures in understandable terms to individuals and groups.	<b>J</b>

## VIII. Personal Development and Planning

### Description

This competency considers an individual being able to work with subordinates or a supervisor. It considers an agency's plan for charting a course of action for developing an individual.

### Outline

A. Meet agency physical and mental fitness requirements.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of National Wildfire Coordinating Group and agency requirements.	<b>J</b>
Ability to utilize a physical training program to enhance physical and mental fitness.	<b>W</b>
Ability to perform duties under stressful and adverse operating conditions, such as long work hours, heavy workloads, emergency situations, adverse working and environmental conditions.	<b>W</b>
Ability to recognize fitness potential in subordinates and provide opportunities to achieve this potential.	<b>W</b>

B. Set individual career goals and implement self-directed course of action.

<u>Competencies</u>	Dispatch Functions
Knowledge of career development strategies.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of self-direction capabilities.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of agency and interagency opportunities and requirements for potential advancement.	<b>J</b>
Skill in demonstrating a belief in one's own abilities and ideas.	<b>J</b>
Ability to set personal goals for career development and implement actions to obtain them.	<b>J</b>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Ability to use a performance appraisal to assess one's performance strengths and weaknesses to lead toward improvement.	<b>W</b>
Ability to develop self-motivation.	<b>J</b>
Ability to seek feedback from others and opportunities for self-learning and development.	<b>J</b>
Ability to perform a personal role assessment, which would lead to monitoring behavior patterns associated with the functions performed.	<b>J</b>

## **IX. Agency Operations**

### **Description**

This competency requires a comprehension of the basic operations of an agency, especially at the local level; and how these operations interact to fulfill the missions, planning and budgetary processes and agency purpose.

### **Outline**

A. Apply basic principles of appropriation law.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of appropriation law relevant to supervisory and leadership roles.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of the aspects of appropriation law pertinent to the expenditure of funds and relative to the agency mission.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of agency fiscal regulations.	<b>J</b>
Ability to describe the budget authority relevant to supervisory and leadership roles.	<b>W</b>
Ability to describe the purpose of an obligation.	<b>W</b>

## B. Implement and evaluate financial activities.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of agency financial regulations, policy and guidelines.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of interagency fire business management practices and procedures.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of required fiscal documentation.	<b>J</b>
Ability to apply appropriate fiscal procedures.	<b>J</b>

## C. Apply appropriate technology.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of existing fire information databases and software applications.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of current technology and the impact of technological changes on the organization.	<b>E</b>
Ability to apply technologies on the job.	<b>E</b>
Ability to identify various sources available that enable supervisors to keep current on technological advances.	<b>J</b>
Ability to describe one's role in information and technological exchange.	<b>J</b>

## D. Develop and maintain agency and interagency operations.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of the various aspects of local unit interactions and how they work together to accomplish the agency and local unit missions.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the external agency operations.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of the customer consultation process.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of agency cooperative agreements, memorandums of understanding.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the organization and the function of cooperative interagency fire organizations such as NWCG, NICC, GACC, state and local organizations.	<b>J</b>
Ability to provide input into Cooperative Agreements, MOUs, and MOAs.	<b>J</b>
Ability to participate at the appropriate level in interagency workshops and seminars.	<b>J</b>

## E. Initiate and participate in agency and interagency interdisciplinary planning processes.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of what constitutes a correctly written objective.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of how goals and strategies provide structured guidance in accomplishing an agency's mission.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of agency's priorities.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of how an agency's planning system causes a timely reconsideration of priorities.	<b>J</b>
Skill in providing input into objective writing.	<b>J</b>
Skill in restructuring priorities to meet goals or objectives.	<b>J</b>
Ability to review portions of plans and provide input.	<b>J</b>

## F. Utilize agency qualifications and certification procedures.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of agency and interagency qualification and certification standards and procedures adopted by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of position task book requirements.	<b>W</b>
Ability to maintain position qualification.	<b>J</b>

## X. Program/Project Progress Monitoring and Evaluation

Description

These competencies are related in terms of adjusting program operations in a timely manner. Progress is directed to carrying out quantifiable objectives. Monitoring that part of the operation identifies whether the objectives are valid, understood, and whether the employee is capable of performing the tasks.

Outline

## A. Implement measurement systems that accurately track results.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of agency performance requirements.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of basic wildland fire program requirements.	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire operations/prescribed fire tools and equipment.	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of reporting requirements and procedures.	<b>E</b>
Ability to implement the common monitoring techniques of feedback and personal observation used in evaluating a project's progress.	<b>J</b>

**B. Evaluate results against program objectives.**

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Dispatch Functions</b>
Knowledge of evaluative processes and procedures.	<b>J</b>
Ability to analyze organizational performance relative to given objectives.	<b>J</b>
Ability to recognize how objectives establishing the direction efforts are to be focused and the criteria for measuring success.	<b>J</b>



## COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR CENTER MANAGER

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### Center Manager Position Descriptor

A Center Manager is one whose primary purpose is to direct, plan, organize, supervise, coordinate, and manage personnel and operational activities of an initial attack dispatch center by providing for focused, responsible coverage during daily operations and emergency situations with other federal, state, tribal, county and local cooperators. Executes operating plans and action guides for efficient and cost-effective mobilization to emergency situations. Ensures activities directed by the initial attack dispatch center are conducted safely. Performs a variety of staff and administrative duties relating to fire suppression and prescribed fire activities. Prior fire fighting experience is a requirement of this position.

### EXPERTISE LEVELS DEFINITIONS

#### WORKING – W

**Definition:** The minimum level of experience and/or training that it takes to produce work of acceptable quality.

#### JOURNEY – J

**Definition:** Has sufficient experience to be considered a seasoned employee. Is skilled in performing the more difficult tasks related to the function. Has received advanced training in the function.

#### EXPERT – E

**Definition:** Reflects the quality of experience and/or training needed to perform the most challenging aspects of the position.

"Program Complexity Levels" refers to those determined from the complexity analysis process. Some positions do not vary in the expertise levels of competencies, regardless of the complexity of the program to which they are assigned. Others have only a minimum level of competency expertise defined, recognizing that there is too wide a variety of programs within and between agencies to define all situations. The remainder have either two or three levels of competency expertise, based on their unit's program complexity.

### Example of Expertise and Complexity Levels

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of processes and sources of training.	W	J	J

In this example, a “W” Working level of expertise is required in a Low complexity fire program; a “J” Journey level of expertise is required in both Moderate and High complexity fire programs.

## I. Fire Program Management Support

### Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to provide efficient and effective support to fire program management.

### Outline

A. Develop and implement goals and objectives in support of fire program management.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of presuppression, suppression, detection, and fire management activity plans as they apply to dispatching.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of agency and interagency financial management system.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the incident support organization.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of computer data entry and retrieval.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of federal, state, tribal, county, and local wildland firefighting organizations, terminology, techniques, resources, Mutual Aid Agreements and operating plans for the dispatch center's jurisdictional area of responsibility.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in planning and coordinating an initial attack dispatch center by providing focused, responsible coverage during daily operations and emergency situations with other federal, state, tribal, county and local cooperators.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in utilizing computer hardware and specialized applications specific to initial attack dispatching, expanded dispatch, fire suppression, prescribed fire, aviation management and administration.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill ensuring that unit personnel's incident qualifications are maintained using various agency computer programs.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to analyze the activity and suppression planning for their area of influence and adjacent areas and keep fire managers apprized of potential problems.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Ability to develop dispatch operating guides which include authorities, roles, and responsibilities for expanded dispatch, technical and administrative support within the incident support organization.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to identify and define dispatch related issues and apply corrective actions and enforce policies and procedures to increase efficiencies and effectiveness.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to prepare or direct the preparation of the daily situation report, annual fire report, fire statistics, and aviation activity reports.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to follow established agency and interagency procedures for records creation, maintenance, and disposal.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>

B. Supervise and develop employees.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Ability to effectively oversee the dispatch center and make sound operational and cost effective decisions during critical situations and changing priorities.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to recognize stressful and adverse operating conditions, such as long hours, heavy workloads, emergency situations, adverse working and environmental conditions and apply corrective actions.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>

C. Communicate orally and in writing, using appropriate technology.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of documentation requirement to preserve data pertaining to dispatch center activities.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in instructing and operating telecommunication equipment, computer based applications, and other related communications equipment in the dispatch center.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to effectively and efficiently communicate and interact with co-workers, public, media, and other customers of the dispatch center.	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to present dispatch training, and develop or modify existing training packages.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

## II. Mobilization

### Description

This element describes the knowledge, skills and abilities required to mobilize and demobilize overhead, crews, aircraft, equipment and supplies for wildland fire, prescribed fire activities, and other activities.

### Outline

A. Provide local, geographic and national mobilization and demobilization support.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of standard fire dispatch procedures, predefined initial attack response zones, and operating guides used in ordering and mobilization of overhead, crews, aircraft, equipment and supplies for wildfire, prescribed fire and other non-fire emergencies.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Knowledge of agency and interagency mobilization policies, procedures and guidelines.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire management resources, fire position qualifications, equipment, capabilities, sources and ordering procedures.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the organization and function of the National Interagency Coordination Center and the geographic area coordination centers.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge and understanding of field operational procedures, principles, and techniques employed in all aspects of fire suppression.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire behavior and weather conditions to effectively dispatch fire management resources.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of cache management procedures.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of maps and land photos of various types such as topographical, unit, and aerial.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in applying national, geographic area, local mobilization guides, and dispatch operating guides.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Skill in ensuring that monitoring and tracking resources follow standard guidelines and procedures, including aircraft, overhead, crews, and equipment.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Skill in ensuring that plotting and identifying locations to determine land status, direct resources to the incident site, and track resources through the application of latitude and longitude, township, range, and section, and VOR bearing and distance.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to determine when to expand dispatch center based on activity levels.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to ensure that dispatch center functions as the incident focal point prior to the arrival of the responding resource.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to ensure that dispatch center is obtaining and documenting incident size-up information per the dispatch center's operating guide, and brief supervisor of incident status or anticipated needs.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to take independent action when dispatch procedures have not been established or do not apply to the current situation.	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to prioritize and allocate resources based on resource values as identified in land management plans, national, geographic area, and local preparedness levels, resource availability, and existing and predicted weather conditions.	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to coordinate mobilization of resources to multi-jurisdictional incidents including mutual aid with local non-federal cooperators.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>

### III. Operations

#### Description

This competency identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for providing dispatch support to field operations involving preparedness, suppression, fuels and prescribed fire, and aviation activities.

#### Outline

A. Provide preparedness dispatch support services.

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Knowledge of aerial and land-based detection systems and technologies.	W	W
Knowledge of wildland fire prevention principles and techniques, fire prevention guides, and applications.	W	W
Knowledge of fire permitting processes and closures.	W	W
Skill in interpreting and relaying daily fire weather forecasts, "red flag" warnings, spot weather forecasts, predicted weather and burning indices and the relation to preparedness levels and staffing for suppression and aviation resources.	E	E
Ability to ensure that weather data from weather information management system (WIMS) is accurately input.	J	J
Ability to identify and utilize new technology as it relates to weather data.	W	W

## B. Provide suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire support services.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge in fire suppression and prescribed fire strategies, tactics, methods and procedures.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of appropriate management responses.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of various smoke management regulations including EPA, state, tribal, and agency specific.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Skill in recognizing changing conditions, developing alternative strategies and taking appropriate action.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in keeping field personnel and agency administrators or MAC Group informed of critical information (red flag, fire behavior, burning conditions, resource shortages).	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Skill in determining anticipated fire behavior.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

## C. Provide aviation dispatch support services.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of fixed and rotary-wing aircraft relating to fire and administrative operations in terms of capabilities, duty limitations, scheduling, flight following, incident or accident notification, and economics.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of airspace designations (e.g., MTR, MOA, TFR, hazards,). Ability to follow established notification procedures for airspace coordination.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of aircraft flight planning, including but not limited to scheduling flights, pilots and aircraft; duty limitations, ordering procedures, procurement and cost comparison analysis.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of aviation safety, including airspace management, search, rescue and medivac procedures, incident reporting procedures, briefing and debriefing pilot, chief of party and passengers.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of communication equipment, radio use, management and etiquette, frequency management, computer and software used in aircraft dispatching.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in applying safe and efficient aviation management procedures.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill ensuring aircraft flight following is according to national, geographic and local area procedures.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in incident or accident notification.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

#### IV. Safety and Welfare

##### Description

This competency identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to support the environmental and workplace hazards of the wildland fire environment, and to provide leadership and direction to subordinates in the recognition and mitigation of these hazards using all applicable laws, policies and guidelines. Personal accountability and zero tolerance for unsafe acts are paramount.

##### Outline

- A. Support wildland and prescribed fire operations in accordance with safety-related laws, policies and guidelines, including:
1. Occupational Safety and Health Act
  2. Applicable state safety regulations
  3. Department and agency policies and guidelines
  4. NWCG guidelines

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Knowledge of the laws, policies and guidelines pertaining to safety, such as the Code of Federal Regulations, national and agency policies and guidelines, Standard Firefighting Orders, Watch Out Situations, and other related fire safety guidelines, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act and NWCG guidelines.	J	J

- B. Conduct safety related education programs focusing on:
1. Training
  2. Certification

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Skill in the effective use of education and certification processes to achieve safety management objectives and ensure compliance.	W	W

- C. Assist with the preparation of hazard, risk, and trend analyses for wildland fire environmental hazards including, but not limited to:
1. Fuels
  2. Weather
  3. Topography

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Skill in conducting hazard, risk, and trend analyses.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>

- D. Identify hazards and risks with appropriate mitigation actions.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Skill in recognizing and mitigating a variety of hazards encountered within the wildland fire environment and other work environments; e.g., aviation, mechanized equipment, and hazardous materials.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>



## **KEY PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS**

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The standard Key Performance Elements are to be used to evaluate employee performance, in conjunction with the Competency Descriptors. A “Performance Element” is defined as a mission-based outcome or end product that is essential to overall success of the position. The following Key Performance Elements are derived from the major elements of each position’s Competency Descriptor.

The first section of these Key Performance Elements is a set of “common” Key Performance Elements, applicable to all positions. These may be used for evaluative purposes, or more likely, for initiation of employee development plans early in one’s career. Following the common elements are additional Key Performance Elements specific to this individual position.



## KEY PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

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### THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS ARE COMMON TO ALL FIRE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POSITIONS:

#### I. Mission Comprehension

- Describe the agency's historical background and mission evolution.
- Identify relevant agency mandates.
- Define the purpose of limits within the agency.

#### II. Agency Orientation

- Describe the structure and organization of the Department of Agriculture or Interior.
- Describe the structure and the organization of the agency.

#### III. Resource Stewardship

- Describe federal stewardship of natural resources.
- Identify resources protected by the agency and describe the responsibilities in managing these resources.
- Define the sustainable practices philosophy.
- Define the employee's role in resource stewardship.
- Recognize the positive purposes of interagency partnerships.

#### IV. Fundamental Values

- Supervise and develop employees.
- Implement safe workplace practices.
- Identify workplace accessibility issues.
- Describe the guiding principles of time management.
- Describe the agency's management culture.
- Carry out cultural diversity, equal opportunity and civil rights procedures.

#### V. Leadership

- Demonstrate appropriate leadership skills to meet agency goals and safe operating procedures.

#### VI. Problem Solving Skills

- Analyze a situation, determine alternative solutions, and recommend a course of action.
- Make sound and well-informed decisions.
- Identify and mitigate stressful influences.
- Utilize facilitation skills to resolve problems and promote consensus.

#### VII. Communication Skills

- Communicate effectively.

**VIII. Personal Development and Planning**

- Meet Agency physical and mental fitness requirements.
- Set individual and career goals and implement self-directed course of action.

**IX. Agency Operations**

- Apply basic principles of appropriation law.
- Implement and evaluate financial activities.
- Apply appropriate technology.
- Develop and maintain agency and interagency operations.
- Initiate and participate in agency and interagency interdisciplinary planning processes.
- Utilize agency qualifications and certification procedures.

**X. Program/Project Progress Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Implement measurement systems that accurately track results.
- Evaluate results against program objectives.

**THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS ARE SPECIFIC TO THE CENTER MANAGER POSITIONS:****I. Fire Program Management Support**

- Develop and implement goals and objectives in support of Fire Program management.
- Supervise and develop employees.
- Communicate orally and in writing, using appropriate technology.

**II. Mobilization**

- Provide local, geographic and national mobilization and demobilization support.

**III. Operations**

- Provide preparedness dispatch support services.
- Provide suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire support services.
- Provide aviation dispatch support services.

**IV. Safety and Welfare**

- Support wildland and prescribed fire operations in accordance with safety-related laws, policies and guidelines, including:
  1. Occupational Safety and Health Act
  2. Applicable state safety regulations
  3. Department and agency policies and guidelines
  4. NWCG guidelines
- Conduct safety related education programs focusing on:
  1. Training
  2. Certification
- Assist with the preparation of hazard, risk, and trend analyses for wildland fire environment hazards including, but not limited to:
  1. Fuels
  2. Weather
  3. Topography
- Identify hazards and risks with appropriate mitigation actions.

